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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3682
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUFHOL/AMEMBASSY BONN 5463
RUEHLD/AMEMBASSY LONDON 9870
RUFHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2423
RUFHNA/USMISSION USNATO 3726
RUEHDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0625
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E.O. 12356: DECL: N/A
TAGS: OREPSUBJECT: SENATOR LARRY PRESSLER'S COMMENTARY ON SDI
TO MEMBERS OF NORTH ATLANTIC ASSEMBLY

1. (UNCLASSIFIED -- ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SENATOR LARRY PRESSLER'S REMARKS TO A LUNCHEON MEETING ON FEBRUARY 13, 1986, OF THE NUCLEAR ARMS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COMMITTEE DID A VAST AMOUNT TO BOLSTER SUPPORT FOR AND INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE. HE MASTERFULLY AND CONVINCINGLY ANSWERED SHARP QUESTIONS FROM EUROPEANS SKEPTICAL OF OR HOSTILE TO SDI. THE QUESTIONERS MAY NOT HAVE LEFT FERVENT SUPPORTERS OF SDI BUT THEY WERE CLEARLY LESS HOSTILE AND SKEPTICAL THAN BEFORE. HE ADDRESSED IN A VERY THOROUGH WAY THE POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF A SDI FOR EUROPE, EXPLORED FUNDING FOR IT, AND THE CAPABILITIES OF EUROPEAN COMPANIES TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH.

3. SENATOR PRESSLER ALSO COMPLETELY ANSWERED SEVERAL CRITICAL QUESTIONS AS TO WHY THERE WAS SUCH DISAGREEMENT AMONG U.S. OFFICIALS ON ARMS CONTROL ISSUES. HE EXPLAINED, TACTFULLY, THAT THEIR PERCEPTION WAS INCORRECT - THAT THE PRESIDENT SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH THE REVERSE OF YES MEN. THEY DEBATED ISSUES, WHICH, BECAUSE OF THE OPENNESS OF OUR PRESS, WERE FREQUENTLY AIRED, BUT THE RESULT WAS BETTER UNDERSTOOD AND MORE VIGOROUS POLICY. HE DELICATELY BUT EFFECTIVELY ALLUDED TO DECISION-MAKING IN WESTERN EUROPEAN STATES THAT FOLLOWED THE SAME COURSE.

4. THE NATO PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM FRG, UK, CANADA, DENMARK, NETHERLANDS, AND FRANCE WERE THEMSELVES INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AUTHORITIES ON DEFENSE ISSUES. FOLLOWING THE LUNCH SEVERAL, PLUS THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT,

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WERE EFFUSIVE IN THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION
FOR SENATOR PRESSLER'S KNOWLEDGE AND CANDOR. CARMEN#
END OF MESSAGE UNCLASSIFIED

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